

Georgia Southern University

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Accreditation Update

Office of Institutional Assessment and
Accreditation

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Georgia Southern University

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ACCREDITATION UPDATE

Your Roadmap to Successfully Navigating SACSCOC Reaffirmation of Accreditation

This fall, we are initiating an important university-wide process to prepare for reaffirmation of accreditation with SACSCOC. This process is an opportunity for us to reflect on the defining characteristics of our institution and to document and strengthen our policies and procedures to ensure the quality and sustainability of all aspects of our institution. As we work together to prepare for our reaffirmation self-study report and peer-review visit, we will share our milestones and next steps through this newsletter.

Scroll to the bottom and click "Enter to Win" for your chance to win a prize for completing a short survey!

GET READY

To engage. To assess. To shine. To achieve Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

SACSCOC Reaffirmation of Accreditation



The Reaffirmation of Accreditation Process

Over the next three years, we will engage in phases of preparation leading up to our off-site and on-site review. Our process starts with collecting information and evidence to support the Compliance Certification, an extensive document that responds to each of the SACSCOC standards of accreditation. Development of this document requires the time and collaboration of all colleges, departments, and administrative units. **Compliance Certification teams, focusing on a subset of related standards, will assist in preparing the Compliance Certification narratives.** In addition, drafts of the Compliance Certification will be reviewed internally and by external consultants for feedback and verification prior to the submission deadline in early Fall 2024.

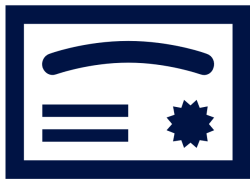
Following the submission of the Compliance Certification, SACSCOC initiates a three-stage review process:



1. The Off-Site Reaffirmation Review. An Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee of 8-10 peer evaluators will review the Compliance Certification narrative prepared by Georgia Southern in **Fall 2024**. The committee will prepare a report explaining preliminary findings based on the Compliance Certification that is shared with the chair of the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee.



2. The On-Site Reaffirmation Review. In **Spring 2025**, the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee, consisting of representatives from peer institutions, will visit our campuses to conduct a focused evaluation and will follow-up on any issues of compliance. At the conclusion of the visit, their findings are summarized in the Report of the Reaffirmation Committee. The report is then sent forward to the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, along with any institutional response to areas of non-compliance.



3. Review by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees. The Committees on Compliance and Reports, a standing committee of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, reviews the report and makes a recommendation of whether to send the report forward for Executive Council Review. The Executive Council makes a recommendation to the full Board of Trustees, who makes the final determination of reaffirmation and any required monitoring activities. Our reaffirmation of accreditation is announced at the SACSCOC annual meeting in **December 2025**.

Institutional Assessment and Accreditation (IAA) will continue to share status updates and refined timelines as we prepare for our Compliance Certification submission and subsequent reviews.

From the Accreditation Coordinator

Given the importance of accreditation and the extensive nature of documentation required to support compliance, there can be some anxiety associated with accreditation processes. Although preparing for reaffirmation may seem overwhelming, please remember what accreditation means for our institution and its students.

Why is accreditation important?

- Determines if an institution meets or exceeds common standards of excellence for education
- Effects eligibility of faculty and staff to receive grants
- Helps students identify acceptable institutions for enrollment
- Determines eligibility for students to receive federal and state financial aid
- Impacts acceptance and transferability of credit hours and courses to other institutions
- Enables graduates to sit for licensing exams and pursue graduate programs
- Helps employers determine if a job applicant is qualified

Accreditation is about a commitment to assessment and continuous improvement. Georgia Southern embodies this commitment in all aspects of what we do - Growing ourselves to grow others! So, despite any apprehension regarding the large-scale task at hand, please remember the IAA team is here to answer your questions and support you throughout this process. I personally look forward to sharing how each area of the university contributes to the mission of the institution and supports the success of our students.

Until the future,

Serena

Section 1: The Principle of Integrity

The Principles of Accreditation, the document that details accreditation requirements by SACSCOC, were modified in 2018. This reaffirmation of accreditation process will be the first time that the institution has fully addressed the new standards. The revised principles include 14 sections arranged by

topic. Sections are further divided into specific standards institutions must address, many of which are based on federal requirements for institutions and accrediting bodies. In each *Accreditation Update*, we will focus on one of the SACSCOC sections or standards of accreditation.



Section 1 addresses the Principle of Integrity. This standard includes one sub-standard:

1.1 The institution operates with integrity in all matters. [CR]

This standard precedes the Compliance Certification to emphasize the importance of the accuracy, completion, and currency of all submitted narratives and evidence. This is a core requirement [CR] for accreditation as well as one of the six core values of SACSCOC.

Did you know?

The **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)** is a non-profit organization and was founded in 1895 in Atlanta, Georgia. SACS has two branches - one for accrediting institutions of higher education, the Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and one for accrediting K-12 schools (SACSCASI). Each arm operates relatively independently.

SACSCOC, recognized by the United States Department of Education, accredits public and private educational institutions across Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Latin America, and various international institutions.

Excellence in Assessment: Student Affairs

Continuous quality improvement, another core value of SACSCOC, is not possible without evaluating the effectiveness of our services. **Standard 7.3** states ***The institution identifies expected outcomes of its administrative support services and demonstrates the extent to which the outcomes are achieved.*** These outcomes can differ by unit and can be based on efficiency, quality, and strategic goals.

The Division of Student Affairs supports a range of programs each year and developed an innovative approach to capturing and communicating the effectiveness of programs initiated in the 2020-2021 academic year. From June 7th-9th, the Division of Student Affairs held a TEDx-style event to highlight success stories from a challenging year that required creativity, determination, and agility to provide essential programming and support for students. Student Affairs leaders shared the details of their programs, including metrics used to measure the reach and impact of services. Some examples of these initiatives and accomplishments include:

- Launch of **Eagle Engage**, a powerful tool for students and departments to track student engagement in a variety of programs and services across the university
- Development of the **CARES team** for providing COVID-19 support
- Addition of a **food pantry** on the Statesboro campus

This assessment and sharing process also helped inform goals and outcomes for next year.

Check out more of their impressive accomplishments below!

HEALTH SERVICES

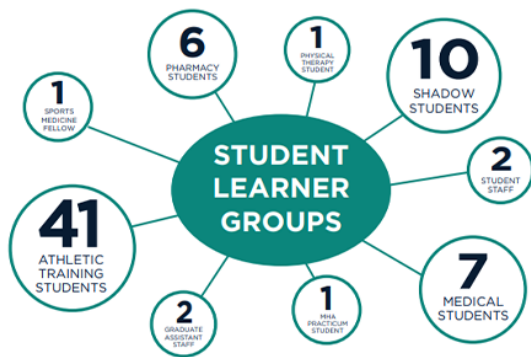
36,617 Clinic &
Department Encounters

4,924 Unique Patients

STUDENT MEDIA

1.7 Million Student
Touchpoints via Newsletter





CRI

CAMPUS RECREATION
AND INTRAMURALS



221,074 Total
Participants in
2020-2021

The Georgia Southern University Golf Course saw an increase in revenue in FY21, up to \$1,070,000.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION



\$29,185.41: Total Amount Funded

\$33,517.30: Total Amount Raised Since
July 2020

UNIVERSITY HOUSING

87% Students indicated
they were **Satisfied or
Very Satisfied** with their
overall residential
experience.

10,548 Total Attendees of
Residential Curriculum
Model Programs

STUDENT WELLNESS & HEALTH PROMOTION

91% of student
respondents reported
positive behavior intention
for health behavior change
in FY21

LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



**SOUTHERN
LEADERS**
Emerge with Distinction

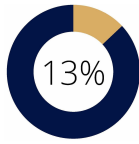
Southern Leaders was **voted 2021
Outstanding Leadership Program of
the Year** by the NASPA Student
Leadership Programs Knowledge
Community.

8,291 Hours of Leadership
Development for Students involved with
OLCE Programs.

35,758 Service Hours Completed by GS
Students, With a Volunteer Impact Total
of **\$1,020,533.32**

CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FRATERNITY & SORORITY LIFE



13% of Georgia Southern students are members of the FSL Community.

5,838 active employers in FY21 via Handshake (4x increase compared to the previous platform)

21,090 job opportunities that students and alumni can access (full-time and part-time).



STUDENT ACTIVITIES

8,888 Total Student Participants

141 Total Programs

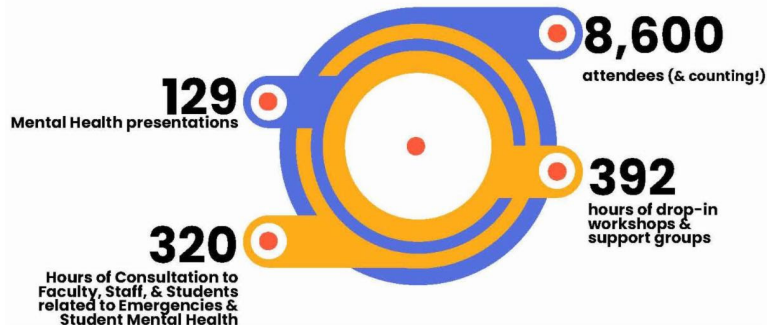
30,000 Virtual Participants

284 Active Student Organizations

17 New Student Organizations

COUNSELING CENTER

All during the COVID-19 pandemic!



97% of clients stated that the services at the counseling center helped them be successful in college.

*This is an abbreviated list of Student Affairs units and accomplishments over the last year.

**Special thank you to the Division of Student Affairs for allowing us to share their accomplishments and to Ryan Pye, graduate assistant, for allowing us to reuse graphics from the Student Affairs newsletter.

The Division of Student Affairs cultivates an inclusive environment to advance students' holistic development through intentional learning and transformative engagement.

Upcoming Events

COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION TEAM KICK-OFF MEETING

Wednesday, September 15th
8:30-11:30 AM

SACSCOC Accreditation Resources

As we work together to prepare for our Compliance Certification and on-site review, keep in mind the resources provided by SACSCOC:

[The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#)

In addition to providing all the standards and sub-standards for accreditation, this document provides an overview of the philosophy, purpose, and process of accreditation and reaffirmation.

[Resource Manual for The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#)

This document provides additional guidance regarding requirements and recommendations for each standard and includes a list of guiding questions and evidence that could be used to support compliance.



best practice reference materials.

Institutional Assessment and Accreditation (IAA) works collaboratively with faculty, staff, and administration to ensure the quality of the programs and educational experiences offered by the university, addressing the unique assessment needs of courses, departments, colleges, or units through individual and group consultations, professional development workshops, recommendations for technology implementation, and